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OREGON OPERATIONAL OFFICE

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EPA-REGION 10

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Harbor Comments
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

I am the president of Advanced Marine Service, a company that has been in operation for twenty years here in Portland. We provide repair, storage, and other marine services to our customers. I'm in the boat business and we rely on boaters. Many of them boat on the Willamette or the Columbia. If the EPA's plan to dredge over 150 acres of contaminated sediment from the riverbed were to pass, my business--as well as other local businesses--would be negatively affected.

The EPA's current plans could shut down portions of the Willamette for decades, and we might lose up to 25% of our customers because of this. It would also hurt other businesses that operate on the river, especially tourist and recreational companies like the jet boats downtown, if parts of the river were inaccessible and unappealing due to large and noisy equipment. This plan would also require the money of local taxpayers and businesses. The EPA's estimates for the cost of this plan have ranged from \$746 million to \$1.4 billion, and this is too great a cost to expect us to pay. Taxes are already too high, and any greater increases could even put me out of business.

The Willamette River's pollution goes back to the turn of the century, when the water was first exposed to harmful contaminants. Recent studies that the EPA is ignoring have shown that the river, through natural processes, has already removed at least 40% of the contaminants since they tested it in 2004. We should leave the contaminants where they are and let the river naturally take care of them. This plan to dredge the contaminated sediments would only stir things up and cause them to go downstream and eventually into the ocean. If the EPA and the city of Portland is truly concerned about the health of the river, efforts should instead be made to keep new pollutants from entering the water. Money would be more wisely spent if it were used to control sewage spills and contaminants like fertilizers and pesticides from the Willamette Valley.

I can't see that the Environmental Protection Agency had the best interests of residents or local small business owners like myself in mind when they drafted this plan. The cost to taxpayers is unacceptable, the damage that it could do to local businesses like my own is substantial, and the plan might not even be effective. I would say to the EPA, "Listen to the people. Listen to the taxpayers who have to pay for this plan." It is not the solution that the community wants or needs.

Sincerely,

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President

(b) (6)

Portland, OR 97266